

challenges, it is important for us to be able to look to exemplary institutions such as Merritt for encouragement and inspiration. On behalf of the 9th Congressional District, I salute and congratulate Merritt College for 50 extraordinary years of service to our community. Merritt's students and stewards have demonstrated that an institution of higher education can not only be dynamic and innovative, but can truly be a force for hope, community empowerment and social change.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY MONTH

HON. PATRICK J. KENNEDY

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 5, 2005

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island. Mr. Speaker, just last week, our nation recognized April as Occupational Therapy Month. Occupational therapy is a health, education, wellness, and rehabilitation service that helps individuals engage in everyday activities, or "occupations." More than 100,000 licensed occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants provide services to children and adults in a variety of settings across the nation, including 766 in my home state of Rhode Island. Services are provided by qualified professionals whose training includes anatomy and physiology, sociology, and psychology, including how disability affects an individual's ability to develop "skills for the job of living."

Occupational therapy focuses on performance of meaningful daily life activities, such as education, work, play, leisure, and social participation, despite impairments or limitations in physical or mental functioning. Occupational therapy not only helps children with disabilities to learn in school, but, also assists adults recovering from stroke to lead full and productive lives.

With its roots in mental health, occupational therapy focuses on the relationship between the client and their performance abilities, the demands of the activity, and the physical and social contexts within which the activity is performed. An individual's performance is evaluated through their psychological, social, and emotional responses, which assists the therapist in implementing specific treatments to address the patient's current needs and problems. Occupational therapy was recently profiled by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) on its National Mental Health Information Center's website.

I am pleased to recognize the importance of occupational therapy and the valuable service that it provides for millions of individuals and families.

IN HONOR OF THE CINCO DE MAYO CELEBRATION AT PIKE PARK

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 5, 2005

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Cinco de Mayo celebration at Pike Park in Dallas, Texas.

Cinco de Mayo is a day for special pride and remembrance for the Hispanic community.

It's a reminder of the proud heritage of many Americans and the warm and growing friendship between two great nations. It's a day worth celebrating. Today we recognize the continuous efforts to bring the community together through the Pike Park Advisory Council and the Pike Park Preservation League.

Originally called Summit Play Park, Pike Park was constructed in 1915 and through the efforts of the Consul General from Mexico. The Mexican American children of the neighborhood were finally allowed to use the park and swimming pool in the mid 1930's

The name changed in 1927 to Pike Park Recreation Center named after Mr. Edgar Pike, a member of the Dallas Park Board. Pike Park has served as the site of the "Fiestas Patrias" (Cinco de Mayo and Dies y Sies de Septiembre) since the late 1930's.

Pike Park has also served as the bastion for civic and social events of the Mexican-American community for over 65 years.

It is with great pride that I recognize the Pike Park Advisory Council and the Pike Park Preservation League are duly recognized as the future coordinators of the "Fiestas Patrias".

VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION FOR THE FUTURE ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. ENI F. H. FALEOMAVAEGA

OF AMERICAN SAMOA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 4, 2005

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 366) to amend the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1998 to strengthen and improve programs under that Act:

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H.R. 366, the Vocational and Technical Education for the Future Act. I want to commend my esteemed colleague, Mr. CASTLE, for his leadership on educational issues and particularly for sponsoring this important legislation.

Vocational and technical education is critically important in American Samoa. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, only 13 percent of 18 to 24 year-olds were enrolled in college classes, leaving a large number of the Territory's youth out of school, but unprepared for the skilled labor market.

In order for American Samoa to continue our economic development, our youth need skills training in construction skills, including carpentry, welding, and electrical engineering. We need architects, engineers and auto mechanics. The funding H.R. 366 provides will allow American Samoa to give our people the necessary skills to compete in this economy.

I support this legislation and I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of H.R. 366.

RECOGNIZING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF VICTORY IN EUROPE (V-E) DAY DURING WORLD WAR II

SPEECH OF

HON. STEVE BUYER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 3, 2005

Mr. BUYER. Mr. Speaker, today the Congress recognized the 60th anniversary of Victory in Europe Day. World War II was a defining moment in the lives of our Nation's Greatest Generation. Men and women whose early youth was shaped in the ordeal of the Great Depression showed the values formed in that crucible when tyranny threatened a world. More than 4 million Americans served in our armed forces in the cauldron of Europe. Nearly 200,000 of them made the ultimate sacrifice there serving the cause of freedom. Today, as we must every day, we recognize and honor the service and sacrifices made by them and by our allies fighting by their side. Their legacy—and the legacy of their generation—is a freer world of opportunity and equality, which we inherit with gratitude and serve with humility.

HONORING THE SERVICEMEMBERS LEGAL DEFENSE NETWORK (SLDN)

HON. MARTIN T. MEEHAN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 5, 2005

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the hard work and dedication of Servicemembers Legal Defense Network (SLDN), a national non-profit organization dedicated to ending the military's failed "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy.

SLDN was co-founded by Dixon Osburn and Michelle Beneke in 1994 as a legal service agency with the mission of providing counsel to service members discharged under "Don't Ask, Don't Tell." Since that time, SLDN has assisted more than 6,500 gay and lesbian troops and obtained thirty-five improvements to military regulations related to the policy.

Today, SLDN is the Nation's leading advocacy organization dedicated to repealing "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" and ensuring open service in our armed forces. Through tenacity and strong leadership, the organization has made significant steps forward in breaking down the barrier that bans gays and lesbians from serving openly in the military. The gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender community looks to SLDN as a model for accomplishing policy change.

2004 was a groundbreaking year for the organization. SLDN filed a monumental lawsuit on behalf of twelve veterans of the War on Terror, challenging the constitutionality of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" in federal court. SLDN's legal expertise also paved the way for two victorious cases before the Army Court of Criminal Appeals, overturning military sodomy convictions. And the staff mobilized veterans and supporters from twenty-two states to meet with 90 Congressional offices on their annual "Lobby Day."

I have had the pleasure of working with SLDN since my freshman term in Congress.